WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for driving a display panel in which discharge cells are formed at intersections between a plurality of row electrode pairs corresponding to display lines, and a plurality of column electrodes intersecting with said row electrode pairs, said display panel being driven in sub-fields, each field of a video signal being constituted by a plurality of said sub-fields, wherein:

each of at least two successive sub-fields including a leading sub-field includes a selective write addressing step for setting said discharge cells to a lighted discharge cell mode by applying a scan pulse to one row electrode of said row electrode pair while applying a data pulse corresponding to said video signal to said column electrode thereby selectively causing a writing discharge in said discharge cells;

the sub-fields following said at least two sub-fields include a selective erasure addressing step for setting said discharge cells to an unlighted discharge cell mode by applying said scan pulse to one row electrode of said row electrode pair while applying the data pulse corresponding to said video signal to said column electrode thereby selectively causing an erasing discharge in said discharge cells; and an emission sustain step for applying sustain pulses to said row electrode pairs thereby causing a sustain discharge to be repeated a number of times corresponding to a weighting of that sub-field only in said discharge cells that

are in said lighted discharge cell mode;

the last sub-field of each field includes a first erasing step for inducing a first erasing discharge between said column electrode and one of the row electrodes of said row electrode pair belonging to said discharge cells that have been set to said unlighted discharge cell mode in said selective erasure addressing step; and a second erasing step for inducing a second erasing discharge between the row electrodes of said row electrode pair belonging to said discharge cells that have been set to said lighted discharge cell mode in said selective write addressing step, said first erasing step and said second erasing step being performed immediately after said emission sustain step.

2. The method for driving a display panel according to claim 1, further comprising a reset step for initializing all of said discharge cells to said unlighted discharge cell mode by causing a universal reset discharge in all discharge cells before said selective write addressing step in only said leading sub-field.

3. The method for driving a display panel according to claim 1, wherein intermediate luminance of $N+1$ gradations is displayed by inducing sustain discharges in said emission sustain steps of N leading sub-fields of each field.

4. A method for driving a display panel in which discharge cells are formed at intersections between a plurality of row electrode pairs corresponding to display lines, and a plurality of column electrodes intersecting with

said row electrode pairs, said display panel being driven in sub-fields, each field of a video signal being constituted by a plurality of said sub-fields, wherein:

a leading sub-field of each field includes a selective write addressing step for setting said discharge cells to a unlighted discharge cell mode by applying said scan pulse to one row electrode of said row electrode pair while applying a data pulse corresponding to said video signal to said column electrode thereby selectively causing an erasing discharge in said discharge cells; and an emission sustain step for applying sustain pulses to said row electrode pairs thereby causing a sustain discharge repeated a number of times corresponding to a weighting of that sub-field only in said discharge cells that are in said lighted discharge cell mode;

the sub-fields following said leading sub-field include a selective erasure addressing step for setting said discharge cells to an unlighted discharge cell mode by applying said scan pulse to one row electrode of said row electrode pair while applying the data pulse corresponding to said video signal to said column electrode thereby selectively causing an erasing discharge in said discharge cells; and an emission sustain step for applying sustain pulses to said row electrode pairs thereby causing a sustain discharge repeated a number of times corresponding to a weighting of that sub-field only in said discharge cells that are in said lighted discharge cell mode;

the last sub-field of each field includes a first

erasing step for inducing a first erasing discharge between said column electrode and one of the row electrodes of said row electrode pair belonging to said discharge cells that have been set to said unlighted discharge cell mode in said selective erasure addressing step; and a second erasing step for inducing a second erasing discharge between the row electrodes of said row electrode pair belonging to said discharge cells that have been set to said lighted discharge cell mode in said selective write addressing step, said first erasing step and said second erasing step being performed immediately after said emission sustain step.

5. The method for driving a display panel according to claim 4, further comprising a reset step for initializing all of said discharge cells to said unlighted discharge cell mode by causing a universal reset discharge in all discharge cells before said selective write addressing step in only said leading sub-field.

6. The method for driving a display panel according to claim 4, wherein intermediate luminance of $N+1$ gradations is displayed by inducing sustain discharges in said emission sustain steps of N leading sub-fields of each field.